

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A die cutting apparatus, comprising:

at least one metal base portion in the form of a plate having a front surface, a back surface and perimeter sides;

at least one blade fixedly attached to and extending outwardly from said front surface of said at least one metal base portion and exposing at least one cutting edge along an edge of said at least one blade, said at least one metal blade forming an enclosed shape;

a covering disposed at least partially over said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and at least partially covering said perimeter sides of said at least one metal base portion; and

a layer of adhesive interposed between said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and said covering, wherein the layer of adhesive permanently fixedly attaches said back surface of said at least one metal base portion to said covering.

2.-16. (Cancelled)

17. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein said covering is comprised of plastic.

18. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein said covering increases the overall thickness of the die cutting apparatus for adapting said at least one blade for use with an existing die cutting press.

19. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein said covering extends substantially over said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and substantially along at least a portion of said perimeter sides of said at least one metal base portion.

20.-35. (Cancelled)

36. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein said at least one metal base portion and said at least one blade are separate components that are welded together to form a cutting die.

37.-39. (Canceled)

40. (Currently Amended) A die cutting apparatus, comprising:

a metal plate having a front surface, a back surface and perimeter sides;

at least one metal blade fixedly depending outwardly from said front surface of said at least one metal plate, said at least one metal blade forming an enclosed shape, said at least one metal blade having an exposed cutting edge for cutting into a medium in sheet form;

a housing disposed over said back surface of said metal plate and at least partially covering said perimeter sides of said metal plate; and

a layer of adhesive interposed between said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and said housing, wherein the layer of adhesive permanently fixedly attaches said back surface of said at least one metal base portion to said housing.

41.-42. (Canceled)

43. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 40, wherein said housing is comprised of a softer material than said metal plate to substantially uniformly distribute a force being applied to said housing to said back surface of said metal plate.

44. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 43, wherein said housing is comprised of molded plastic and configured with a recess that substantially matches the perimeter sides of the metal plate.

45. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 40, wherein said housing increases the overall thickness of the die cutting apparatus to allow the metal plate and at least one metal blade to be used in an existing pressing device.

46. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 45, wherein said housing is an adapter having a predetermined thickness to adapt said metal plate for use with an existing pressing device.

47. (Currently Amended) A die cutting apparatus, comprising:

at least one metal base portion in the form of a plate having a front surface, a back surface and perimeter sides and defining at least one channel therein;

at least one blade fixedly positioned within said at least one channel and extending outwardly from said front surface of said at least one metal base portion and exposing at least one cutting edge along an edge of said at least one blade, said at least one blade bonded to said at least one metal base portion, and said at least one metal blade forming an enclosed shape;

a covering disposed over said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and substantially covering said perimeter sides of said at least one metal base portion; and

a layer of adhesive interposed between said back surface of said at least one metal base portion and said covering, wherein the layer of adhesive permanently fixedly attaches said back surface of said at least one metal base portion to said covering.

48. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 47, wherein said covering is comprised of plastic.

49. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 47, wherein said covering increases the overall thickness of the die cutting apparatus for adapting the at least one metal base portion to be used with an existing die cutting press.

50.-67. (Cancelled)

68. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 1, wherein the layer of adhesive fixedly attaches said back surface of said at least one metal base portion to said covering.

69.-70. (Cancelled)

71. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 40, wherein the layer of adhesive fixedly attaches said back surface of said at least one metal base portion to said housing.

72.-73. (Cancelled)

74. (Previously Presented) The die cutting apparatus of claim 47, wherein the layer of adhesive fixedly attaches said back surface of said at least one metal base portion to said covering.

75.-76. (Cancelled)